

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 DLOS-09 L-03 CG-00 DOTE-00
EB-08 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /040 R

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APPROVED BY OES/OFA/FA:LSNEAD

ARA/PAN-MR. NADEAU

-----292112Z 034204 /66

P 291934Z MAR 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069350

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, PN, PLOS, PFOR

SUBJECT: US TUNA FISHERMEN AND GOP FISHING REGULATIONS

REF: (A) PANAMA 2064, (B) PANAMA 2089

1. DEPT. HAS TAKEN STEPS TO VERBALLY NOTIFY U.S. TUNABOAT OWNERS OF GOP INTENTIONS TO ENFORCE 200-MILE FISHING LIMIT AGAINST VESSELS WITHOUT GOP FISHING LICENSES. OFFICIAL LETTER WILL FOLLOW IF EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS WOULD BE WORTH-WHILE. BUT BEFORE DOING THIS DEPT. WOULD LIKE TO KNOW SPECIFIC PROCEDURES WHICH SHOULD BE FOLLOWED TO OBTAIN GOP LICENSE, AS WELL AS OTHER RELEVANT DETAILS, SHOULD U.S. VESSEL OWNERS DECIDE TO PURCHASE LICENSES SO THAT THIS INFORMATION CAN BE PASSED ON BY DEPT. RESPONSE OF TUNABOAT OWNERS REPRESENTATIVES WAS THAT U.S. VESSELS WOULD NOT BUY GOP LICENSES.

2. U.S. LEGISLATION EXTENDING FISHERIES JURISDICTION TO 200 MILES SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDES JURISDICTION OVER HIGHLY
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MIGRATORY SPECIES OF TUNA, WHICH REQUIRE INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION. CONSEQUENTLY, THE U.S. DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE JURISDICTION OF OTHER COUNTRIES OVER TUNA BEYOND 12-MILES. THUS, JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE BETWEEN U.S. AND COUNTRIES CLAIMING 200-MILE JURISDICTION

OVER TUNA STILL REMAINS, INCLUDING VARIOUS SANCTIONS MAN-

DATED BY SEVERAL PIECES OF U.S. LEGISLATION IN CASE OF SEIZURE OF U.S. FISHING VESSEL. USG POSITION ON PURCHASE OF LICENSES TO FISH TUNA OFF OTHER COUNTRIES BEYOND 12-MILES IS ONE OF NEUTRALITY. LICENSE PURCHASES ARE NEITHER ENCOURAGED OR DISCOURAGED, BUT ARE CONSIDERED TO BE A COMMERCIAL DECISION TO BE MADE BY TUNABOAT OWNERS AND CAPTAINS.

3. EMBASSY SHOULD NOTIFY GOP OF SITUATION OUTLINED PARA 2, INDICATING AT THE SAME TIME THAT WE HOPE SEIZURES, WHICH WOULD BE IN INTEREST OF NEITHER OF OUR GOVERNMENTS, WILL NOT TAKE PLACE IN THE MONTHS AHEAD. GOP SHOULD BE AWARE THAT IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT A NEW TREATY TO MANAGE TUNA IN EASTERN PACIFIC WILL BEGIN TO BE NEGOTIATED DURING 1977 AND THAT HOPEFULLY THIS WILL RESOLVE TUNA PROBLEM. PANAMA, WHICH IS MEMBER OF INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION, WILL OF COURSE BE INVOLVED IN THIS NEGOTIATION.

4. FYI - PRACTICALLY ENTIRE U.S. FLEET NOW TIED UP IN PORT BECAUSE OF U.S. PORPOISE REGULATIONS WHICH MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR VESSELS TO OPERATE ECONOMICALLY. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHEN AND IF THIS PROBLEM WILL BE RESOLVED. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TUNA, FISHING RIGHTS, TWO HUNDRED MILE LIMIT, FISHING REGULATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE069350
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: BSHALLMAN:EEB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770107-1036
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770310/aaaaaing.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 679507ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN OES
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PANAMA 2064, 77 PANAMA 2089
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2935224
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US TUNA FISHERMEN AND GOP FISHING REGULATIONS
TAGS: EFIS, PLOS, PFOR, PN, US
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/679507ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009